# CPSSMUN XIII




# Knives Out

Vaishnavi Bommi and Marcus Liu

# Table of Contents

**Table of Contents** ..... **2**

**Content Disclaimer** ..... **3**

**Equity Concerns** ..... **3**

**Directors' Letter** ..... **4**

**Background Information** ..... **5**

**Topics of Discussion** ..... **8**

Topic #1: Whodunit? ..... 8

Topic #2: Phoenix or Ashes? ..... 10

Topic #3: A Seat at Both Tables ..... 12

**Character List** ..... **13**

**Citations** ..... **39**

# Content Disclaimer

It is important to note that this background guide is based on the Knives Out film series, including its fictional characters, settings, and investigative elements. The imaginative elements that make this narrative possible are solely intended to emphasize the structure and goals of this committee. In consequence of this, this background guide will explore sensitive topics including murder, violence, corporate espionage, thievery, manipulation, corporate corruption, illegal acts, and death. These topics serve the purpose of enhancing this committee's direction and engaging with delegates in formal debate. These ideas exist in this background guide for the overall success of this committee, and the actions and doings in this committee should by any means be replicated in real-world conduct.

# Equity Concerns

Bullying and discrimination are unwelcome practices at CPSSMUN. All attendees of CPSSMUN XIII will be made safe, welcomed, and appreciated, thanks to the efforts of our teacher supervisor and the Secretariat team. In the event that any CPSSMUN Staff, Secretariat, or Delegate acts inappropriately or causes discomfort, please contact our Equity Officer at cpssmodelunequity@gmail.com. This can be done at any time leading up to, during, or after the conference.

# Directors' Letter

*Dear Honourable Delegates,*

We welcome you with the greatest pleasure to the committee of Knives Out: Blood on the Contract! This committee is based on the well-known Knives Out series, as you may know, but with our own twist. In the process of crafting this committee, we ourselves found this murder mystery to be puzzling and challenging, as there was certainly more than meets the eye. Delegates, we cannot wait to see the upcoming debate dates and watch this cold case get solved!

Although this committee shares a universe with the Knives Out franchise, almost all characters were created uniquely, with little to no connection or correlation to the previous universe. The episodic nature of the movies allowed us the freedom to write our own story. All tropes, themes, and outcomes are entirely original. This committee is set in a murder mystery revolving around Victor Montreux's suspicious death. To uncover the ultimate cause of this mystery, we have set 3 main points of discussion, all of which should help you crack the code and solve many of the upcoming challenges. Delegates, it is your duty to help solve this case and figure out the future of Montreux Industries.

As your directors, we strongly recommend that delegates incorporate their own creative outlook on their characters. While being original creations limits the amount of background research you can do, it provides you with the ability to make your character your own. Additionally, while the background guide has no previous attachments to the series, we implore delegates to go forward and watch the movies, as they are incredibly good and can be a helpful resource to use in debate.

Now it is time: will you crack the mystery leading to this pharmaceutical tycoon's demise and save the legacy with it? Or will the company mark its end with this mystery?

Good luck, Delegates; we are extremely excited to see all of you at CPSSMUN XIII!

Sincerely,

Vaishnavi Bommi (she/her) Marcus Liu (he/him)

*Directors of the Knives Out*

# Background Information

At **11:42 pm**, on October 14th, 2026, Victor Montreux was found **dead** in his study at the Montreux Estate.

The room was locked from the **inside.**

*No signs of struggle.*

He sat slumped against a leather armchair, a crystal drinking glass and a prescription vial sitting open in front of him. The fireplace had been recently used.

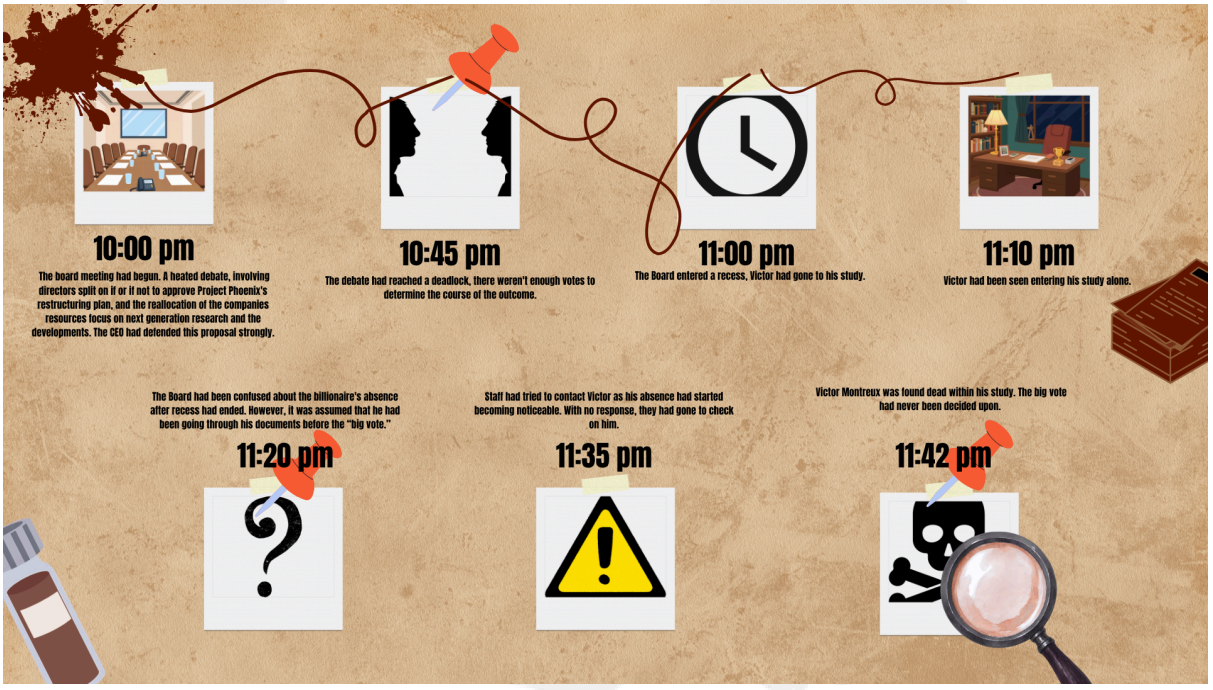
At first, this appears to be a suicide. An unfortunate end to one of the world's most influential entrepreneurs. However, many details do not align.

By **7:00 am** the next morning, news of his death had reached the public. The company's stock price became unstable, and clients demanded answers. Within hours, the Board hired world-renowned detective **Benoit Blanc**, famous for taking on high-profile cases, to find answers. The Board meeting ended as soon as the investigation began.

For decades, the Montreux empire stood as a titan of the industry, founded on principles of decisive leadership and aggressive innovation. However, in recent years, that same decisiveness has gone in the wrong direction, leaving the company stagnant and lagging behind. This slow decline has allowed other newer, faster competitors to step up to the plate. By gradually taking away Montreux's most valued clients and their stake in the market, Valkyrie Global formed in direct response to Montreux's stubbornness, positioning itself as the future of the pharmaceutical industry. Their steady rise over the past few years reached a turning point nine months ago, when Valkyrie Global's company value skyrocketed, and it overtook Montreux Industries in market share. With their hold on the industry quickly slipping, radical action became necessary. Victor Montreux proposed "Project Phoenix" as the answer: a risky company restructure, a final gambit that could secure their position at the top once again or leave them forgotten in the dustbin of history. The project could overtake Montreux's overall research and development efforts, refocusing resources on next-generation technologies while cutting underperforming parts of the

company. By accelerating innovation and bringing an industry-changing technological breakthrough to market ahead of competitors, Project Phoenix could restore Montreux's competitive advantage, attract more investors and clients, and reclaim its position as the industry leader. To make matters worse, Valkyrie has been hinting at a major technological breakthrough–one that could shift the industry permanently. Intel suggests that its long-anticipated launch date has been unexpectedly rescheduled in just **36 hours**.

All of this brings us back to the crime scene, the emergency Board meeting called to vote on Project Phoenix. Attendance was mandatory. The Board has not only been voting on the approval of Phoenix, but on whether Victor Montreux's plan should pass in its current state; this includes the large-scale redistribution of company resources for the next generation of research and development. The debate was divided and heated, but a clear majority has yet to form. The CEO personally led the proposal and defended it strongly. He completely refused to compromise, insisting this was the company's "final opportunity".



Now, delegates, it's your responsibility as part of the Board to find answers. With the former leader of the company dead, it is up to you to decide who among you should replace him–if anyone at all. Yet the mystery around his death must still be addressed, as the threat of foul play may make choosing a leader do more harm than good. All of this must also be juggled with Valkyrie's impending announcement, and the undecided future of Project Phoenix, which proposes a restructuring plan that would redirect many of the significant company resources towards the upcoming generation of research and the chance of restoring Montreux's competitive edge in the industry. Whether the proposal will be passed, modified, or abandoned entirely, and if you can do so in time to stop Valkyrie, is up to you. The company's future is now in your hands; handle it wisely.

# Topics of Discussion

## Topic #1: Whodunnit?

Victor Montreux has left behind uncertainty in an already stressful situation. While his death on the surface appears to be a simple suicide, the toxicology report showed an unidentified chemical compound that doesn't match the medication found within the prescription vial. Additionally, a spontaneous security blackout was triggered just minutes before Victor's death, granting anyone access to restricted areas of the estate. Delegates should make an effort to investigate and discuss who had potential access to Victor's medication, who may have entered his study during this blackout, and whether the outcome of missing documents points towards signs of foul play. Speculation and instability make it impossible to come to a complete conclusion. Board members, staff, and external representatives all had access to his study, varying motives, and influence in the hours leading up to his death. With each passing moment, evidence risks being lost, witnesses' stories become less reliable, and public theories grow. Delaying this investigation might cause irreversible damage to the truth being discovered.

Meanwhile, the possibility that his passing was merely self-inflicted raises a difficult concern. Perhaps the danger lies not in a killer, but in the context that led to Victor's final decision. With markets and competitors already reacting, the way his death is interpreted may have more impact than the death itself. Delegates should examine key clues, including the **seventeen-minute blackout period**, suspicious access to Victor's medicine, and missing documents from his study. The conflicting witness statements and a connection to an unrecognized chemical within Victor's system complicate and create issues within the timeline, raising questions regarding the outcome of his death. It is now up to you, delegates, to choose whether to pursue the definitive truth or manage a narrative to serve a greater purpose. Your judgement will not only shape Victor Montreux's legacy, but also whether Montreux Industries survives this crisis with confidence or falters.

### Guiding Questions

1. What hidden motives or opportunities would a potential killer have?
2. Who has the most to gain from his death? Does this imply responsibility?
3. When everyone is a suspect, how can a leader even be chosen?

# Topic #2: Phoenix or Ashes?

Founded thirty-seven years ago by Victor Montreux, what began as a modest pharmaceutical startup quickly expanded into an internationally infamous superpower. While they have been publicly praised for pushing the frontiers of biomedical research, their private growth has raised questions. Accusations of artificially accelerating drug approvals, even when they haven't been properly vetted, through aggressive lobbying have surfaced, although this has not resulted in formal consequences yet. Many of these drugs had been shifted in the direction of approvals, regardless of the concerns about testing and the safety data, leading to crucial questions regarding Montreux Industries priorities of profits versus public safety. Additionally, with the company now struggling with an impending crisis, investigators must figure out if these rushed approvals lead to a greater picture which connects to Victor Montreux's death. From the beginning, Victor was a control freak, the majority shareholder, and the trustworthy "face" of the company. His confident, direct leadership was key to the company's early success.

But no one stays at the top forever.

Project Phoenix was Montreux Industries' final attempt to reclaim its position at the top. The proposal carries significant financial risk and potential regulatory consequences, but it may be the only way forward. Victor Montreux put Project Phoenix forward as the answer to the company's decline. However, without its creator to advocate for it, the Board must decide whether to proceed with the plan, modify it, or abandon it entirely. Project Phoenix was created as the next step in Montreux Industries' technology initiative for the next generation. By integrating more advanced research and development with more aggressive lobbying, it is designed to help put the company back in a competitive position against Valkyrie Global. This is why the Board must decide whether to fund Project Phoenix in its current form, modify its research, or amend its more extreme philosophy and take a safer route. Further complicating the situation is the looming threat of Valkyrie Global and their impending announcement of a major breakthrough–one that could change the industry forever.

With time limited and instability growing, hesitation may prove just as disastrous as action. At the same time, Montreux Industries faces an immediate power vacuum. Without clear direction, confidence in the company continues to decline, and the internal cracks

within the company continue to grow. Project Phoenix may be a necessary risk for survival, or the final nail in the company's coffin. There is only one way to know. The Board must decide not just what's best in the short term, but how their actions shape the identity of Montreux Industries in the future.

## Guiding Questions

1. Who should replace the CEO? Should the members of the Board all serve as equals, or should there be a single leader?
2. Does the proposal need to be modified or should it be abandoned entirely? How can it be modified to increase the chance of success?
3. How should Montreux Industries react to Valkyrie's announcement?

# Topic #3: A Seat at Both Tables

In the hours surrounding the emergency Board meeting, many clues point toward sensitive corporate information being compromised. The unexpected acceleration of Valkyrie's announcement timeline has aroused suspicion, particularly with how close it aligns with Montreux Industries' approaching collapse. Originally planned for a reveal weeks later, the breakthrough is now rumoured to be unveiled within 36 hours, an adjustment that suggests access to real-time internal company developments. If more information continues to leak, Montreux Industries faces the chance to lose its chance to survive before the Board can make a decision.

The suspicion is further supported by unusual market behaviour, with many Valkyrie-associated entities repositioning assets before any public confirmation of Victor's death. Intelligence has revealed that elements of Project Phoenix, details that have not been formally documented, have been disclosed outside authorized channels. Internal system logs show that restricted files were accessed during the narrow window granted by the security blackout. Whether this breach is an individual acting as a spy for Valkyrie or a whistleblower aligned with regulatory agencies, the result is the same. Information is no longer safe. Be careful what you say, and who you say it to. Everyone is a suspect.

## Guiding Questions

1. Is the leak the work of a whistleblower or a corporate spy?
2. Should Project Phoenix move forward before the spy is found?
3. What measures should be taken to find the source and contain the contents of the leak?

# Character List

## Benoit Blanc



Often considered "The Last of the Gentlemen Sleuths," world-renowned detective Benoit Blanc has a variety of high-profile cases under his belt. While he may be flamboyant, gentlemanly, and somewhat eccentric at times, he is also incredibly intelligent and clever. Although his methods may be unorthodox, the Board hired him because he gets results. Blanc has a tendency to use metaphors that many don't understand, such as when he investigated the murder of author Harlan Thrombey, comparing the case to a "donut". Prioritizing the truth above all else, Blanc will stop at nothing to seek justice, often deceiving and manipulating others to get more information.

While he may be sneaky, snarky and incessant for the sake of his cases, he is also shown to be very kind, often helping out the "underdog." A gifted mind can sometimes become a curse, however, as Blanc tends to "lose it between cases."

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Blanc is not a member of the company and is the only true neutral party. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Blanc is not a suspect. He was not present at the estate during the time of the murder, and was not directly involved with the events leading up to Montreux's death. |

## Mark Montreux



If Victor was the face and figurehead of Montreux Industries, Mark Montreux would be the steady hand of support, working from behind the curtain. As the CEO's right-hand man, he spent his time on the day-to-day inner workings of the company's operations, ensuring that his brother's vision for his company could be realized.

Where Victor was bold and ideological, Mark was quiet and calculating. He built his reputation as someone who just made things work, often quietly correcting and executing decisions from the top. Mark was typically in charge of Victor's schedule, and even had control of who had access to him before the emergency vote. Despite this, he has spent most of his career in the shadow of his brother, never truly getting any recognition. Mark rarely challenged his brother publicly, although members in the company speculated he was more capable of managing Montreux Industries, but lacked the authority to step out of his brother's shadow.

In recent months, many observed rising tensions between the late CEO and his brother, with Mark voicing concerns about the risks Victor was exposing them to. Even so, Mark still remained reliable, as Victor began depending on him more heavily to handle sensitive internal matters. As the second highest rung on the corporate ladder, the responsibility falls on Mark's shoulders to lead the company.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| While Mark saw the intent of his brother's proposal, he believed the plan was far too aggressive. Montreux Industries in its current state could not pay the cost of the proposal if it failed, and the chances of it failing were too great. Rather than a rapid, full-scale restructuring, Mark proposed an amended proposal he had already been working on, prioritizing a more methodical and stable transition over an explosive recovery. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Mark's frustrations with his brother were often not well hidden. Victor's inability to |

compromise had become a regular source of conflict, particularly in the weeks leading up to the Board meeting. Disagreements once handled in private now spilled into the open, and several Board members noticed the discord between the two. Mark remained in the Boardroom as the meeting continued, but his exact location during the blackout is unconfirmed. As second in command, Mark is the most immediate successor to lead Montreux Industries, but whether their drama was strictly professional, or had escalated into something more personal, remains unclear.

## Andrea Hernandez



Dr. Andrea Hernandez is the leader of Montreux Industries' research and development team, supervising the company's efforts to innovate and remain competitive in a fast-changing market. Incredibly intelligent and equally hardworking, Hernandez has expressed concerns that Montreux Industries has been lagging significantly behind the opposition, particularly Valkyrie Global, in developing next-generation technologies.

While much of her work is centred around commercial innovation, she has also been known to be involved with highly confidential research projects, some commissioned by the CEO himself. Very few in the company are aware of the full scope of her hidden research, and as it did not interfere with her professional work, no one asked questions.

In the wake of Valkyrie Global's announcement, colleagues have noticed Hernandez's work becoming increasingly isolated, even within her own division.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| She sees Project Phoenix as a necessary push in the right direction, aligning with her belief that Montreux needs to evolve to survive. Her issues lie with the timelines, as she sees them as unrealistic and potentially compromising long-term breakthroughs. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Hernandez was not a prominent figure in the Boardroom discussions, spending most of the evening continuing to work. However, her access to the estate and company systems would position her in the right spot to take action during the blackout. Because of her close relationship with the CEO, she may have a deeper insight into his state of mind than most, with the two being in constant contact in the days leading up to the meeting. |

## Natalie Miler



Natalie Miler is a junior scientist working under Andrea Hernandez on the prestigious Project Phoenix. Natalie has capability and intelligence like no other; however, she is more often than not overlooked in rooms with stronger, more compelling personalities. She is naturally an introvert, quiet, people-pleasing, and emotionally vulnerable. She's spent a considerable amount of her career attempting to prove her worth within an environment that breezes past her. Natalie desires to earn the respect of others, rather than simply being an overlooked researcher. She hopes to earn a seat at the table, gain greater involvement within projects, and have stronger influence within the company. However, perhaps in an attempt to get ahead, Natalie has met Mark Montreux and developed a private relationship with him. Her love and/or loyalty has made her indispensable to Mark as she often provides him updates on ongoing projects, maybe even ones he doesn't have direct access to…

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Natalie views Project Phoenix as her time to shine and prove her worth to Victor and Montreux Industries. This project is one that has given her relevance and purpose within the company. She views Phoenix as the one thing that has given her usefulness. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Natalie had clear access to the company's internal scientific research, positioning her in a role as other scientists able to leak information. Although Natalie always wanted to prove herself to Victor, her emotional attachment to Mark has given her the purpose to affect the people around her. Perhaps her opportunity is less about murder, but rather a potential accomplice… |

## Nicholas Jones



Nicholas Jones is one of the senior-level researchers on Project Phoenix and can be considered one of the most trusted men in the mentorship of Victor Montreux. Over the years, Nicholas has been able to secure his position in the company due to his analytical mindset, methodological precision, and adherence to scientific research principles. He is a very composed and level-headed person who has remained a key pillar of Montreux Industries in his capacity as a senior researcher, and his colleagues admire his caution and ability to remain sane under pressure.

Nicholas is one of those people who believe that guesses should be discarded when hard evidence speaks louder than theories and suspicions. That is why he finds it difficult to accept the new security measures and the secrecy around Project Phoenix. The main reason for Nicholas' unease is Andrea Hernandez, who controls the primary intelligence database and seems to be aware of more information than is customary for a common worker to know. The issue of secrecy and restricted access to information has become a matter of concern for the scientist, and he is starting to suspect that critical details about Phoenix are hidden for ulterior motives.

Jones' position in the company and his close collaboration with Victor allowed him to understand the real situation with far greater accuracy than most of his colleagues. In the past months, he became aware that something was happening in the organization that was not supposed to be there. The signs were not obvious, but the altered research documentation, restricted access to critical databases, and questionable decisions made by Jones' coworkers became enough to trigger the scientist’s instincts. Despite his doubts, Nicholas kept his concerns to himself and patiently waited for the right moment to reveal the truth.

The scientist has spent the last few weeks collecting pieces of information that he believed were sufficient to prove his point. Instead, he discovered even more suspicious details that pointed to one obvious conclusion: someone in Project Phoenix is deliberately keeping critical information hidden. Nicholas’ loyalty to the company and personal

admiration for Victor Montreux's skills as a leader kept him from jumping to conclusions. However, the closer he got to the truth, the more he realized that his trust was betrayed.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Nicholas views Project Phoenix as a chance to achieve a scientific achievement that comes with great responsibility. He supports the success only through means of transparency and oversight. Nicholas believes wholeheartedly that Phoenix is a project too important to be affected by secrecy or politics. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Nicholas had access to Project Phoenix, particularly Victor. As one of Victor Montreux's trusted researchers, Nicholas had begun doubting the inconsistencies within the research regarding Project Phoenix. His role within the project is defined by his urge to investigate. This means Nicholas has both the motive and opportunity to uncover important information Victor may have wanted to keep hidden from the company. This may be interpreted as discovering the wrong truth at the wrong time, unintentionally… Or not? |

‘

## James Sawyer



Head of the Board and close friend to Victor Montreux, James Sawyer has long been the connective tissue holding Montreux Industries together. Sawyer uses his natural charm to serve as the company's chief diplomat in times of tension and internal conflict. While Victor drove his vision for his company, Sawyer put his vision into words, communicating the competing interests of interlocutors. Charismatic without being flamboyant, he commands attention through empathy for others, making them feel comfortable voicing their opinions, even when guiding them to a specific decision. He is known for his ability to diffuse discord and persuade clients in the company's favour, while also bridging the gap between factions that would otherwise be at odds with one another. His relationship with the CEO extended beyond business, with James being one of the few people whom Victor allowed to challenge him privately. However, with the mounting pressures from Valkyrie Global and internal division within the Board deepening, his ability to mediate is being stretched to its limit.

Now in the aftermath of the CEO's death, Sawyer has slipped into his natural role as a facilitator, not by dominating the discussion, but by shaping what is discussed in the first place. Sawyer supports Project Phoenix, but he believes it can only work if the majority supports it. Having too many people operating with ulterior motives will sabotage the survival of the company and will ensure that the plan is a failure.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| James views Project Phoenix as a chance for Victor to achieve the greatest legacy, and a project that has potential to change the future. He supports Project Phoenix not for personal gain, but because it is important to protect it from those who have the opportunity to weaponize it for power. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| James has had access, authority, and most importantly, close connections to Victor. However, Victor's death has the chance to negatively impact James rather than benefit him, |

leading to him being more of a victim of the crime rather than the one to orchestrate it.

## Daniel Bleathfield



Confident, articulate, and highly perceptive, Daniel Bleathfield is one of the most commanding voices on the Board. Known for his sharp rhetoric and commanding presence, he has built his reputation on his ability to break down complex discussions and push conversations toward decisive action. Unlike Sawyer, who employs diplomacy to get his way, Bleathfield thrives on head-on engagement, challenging, interrupting, and pressuring others to make commitments. To some, this makes him effective, but to others it makes him difficult to work with. Despite his large influence, he has never led the Board, instead being eclipsed by Sawyer at every turn.

This has created a long-standing rivalry between the two, with Bleathfield harbouring much envy towards Sawyer's position, believing that he is more fit to lead. As a strong supporter of Project Phoenix, Bleathfield views it as a necessary and long overdue shift in the right direction. He believes that Montreux Industries has been too stagnant, allowing competitors like Valkyrie Global to gain too much ground. To him, any potential negatives are less than the punishment of inaction, and he has little patience for attempts to alter the proposal. Bleathfield was a very active member of the discussion and was a more vocal participant during debates around Project Phoenix. He frequently clashed with other members, especially when he felt the discussion was prolonged or indecisive.

During the later stages of the meeting, Bleathfield stepped out of the Boardroom. While the exact timing is unclear, it did loosely overlap with the security blackout. With Victor Montreux gone, Bleathfield stands to gain much from a shift in leadership structure. Uncertainty surrounding the company's future, a possible shuffling of Board members, makes challenging Sawyer's position more realistic.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Bleathfield views Phoenix as an opportunity to gain political power within Montreux Industries, a way to change his standing to a key decision-maker in determining the company's upcoming affairs. Second, to gain a scientific achievement, recognition for this breakthrough and the irreversible impact it may have on the industry. Daniel views Phoenix |

more as a technological advantage; he views control over the project as a way to gain power and leverage over the Board, reshaping the hierarchy within the company to his favour.

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Daniel has ambition; he had the opportunity to utilize the influence from the company to control the Board, from order to chaos. Additionally, with Victor opposing the changes in alignment with the company's leadership and having the upper hand on Phoenix, Daniel has a motive to achieve greater authority. His position gives him the opportunity to reach out to senior executives and the overall company decision-making process. This leads him to have the opportunity to change events from the inner circle. Daniel has all the power to take control; however, it is still as clear as mud whether Daniel has orchestrated this murder or created the perfect conditions for it to occur. |

## Evelyn Carter



Evelyn Carter worked as Victor Montreux's assistant. She had access to his schedule, correspondence and private meetings. Evelyn was organized, observant and composed; she built her reputation on being discreet and efficient. People often overlooked her as an assistant; however, she was close to Victor and noticed things others did not. Evelyn was not ambitious like others, but was perceptive and may have seen more than anyone realizes about Victor's final days. It is important to note that Evelyn had organized Victor's meetings and knew about most of the important decisions before Victor had learnt of them.

Unlike many Montreux Industries executives, Evelyn's not chasing power or a high profile. Power, or at the very least success in achieving something important, has always taken center stage in the corporation. However, if there's one person everyone, including Victor is certain is organized, stealthy, and trustworthy, and who is the only one Victor truly shared his information with, it's Evelyn.

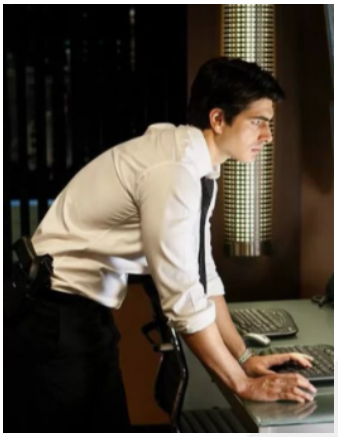
Nobody bothers with Evelyn; most just dismiss her from her job and assume she is a low-level nobody, because of her role within Montreux. They miss just how keenly aware she is behind the scenes of what has been going on and what's happening to whom. During the months prior to Victor's death, Evelyn saw Victor's personality changes. The self-assured CEO became paranoid, taking more office time alone, cancelling meetings, not updating the group about what was really going down with Project Phoenix... She saw the personal cost the failure is costing Victor, but thus far, has told no one else what she learned.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Evelyn did not have a stake in Project Phoenix. She understood its importance because of her close proximity to Victor. To her, Phoenix was more about the tension it caused than a project. This tension consumed Victor in the weeks before his death. She has a personal opinion that the emotional factor of Project Phoenix must be understood before the actual proposal. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |

Evelyn had access to Victor's schedule and communications. She was close to the people surrounding him. While she did not have a motive, her access made her a key witness and a possible liability. Despite not being an obvious suspect, her close relationship with Victor grants her a very exclusive window into his life. Even if not directly responsible for any wrongdoing, her resources and knowledge of Victor make it difficult to believe she knows nothing that may contribute to the case. The big question will be: did Evelyn passively watch the events that went on,n or is she subtly pulling a string somewhere?

## Arthur Kane



He was the Head of Security at Montreux Estate. He was responsible for the safety of the estate and its surveillance systems. Arthur was disciplined, imposing and hard to read. He projected competence and control. He also sat on the Board, giving him influence. Arthur had access to security footage and movement within the estate. He could change exactly what was seen on the night Victor died. It was unclear where his loyalty lay. With Victor, the company or someone else.

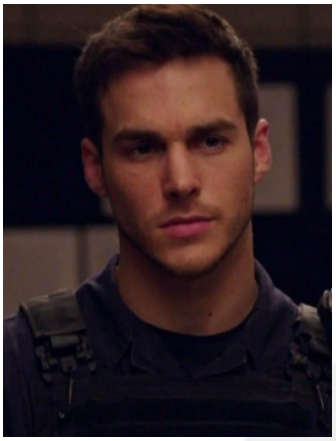
Arthur was part of Montreux Industries' decisions not only because he was their head of security, but he was also a Member of the Board and had authority in the upcoming meetings to be decisions being made. He is in a unique position, being aware of both the political environment of the meeting and the physical presence of many attendees, including where certain board members have been and when. While Arthur maintained that everything he did was to defend Montreux Industries, there seemed to have been other, darker ulterior motives due to his obsessive ways.

He has stated, again, that information is power, and many Board members have disagreed as to where that thought can be viewed as an issue...ethical? Upon Project Phoenix being brought up on the Board agenda, the more and more that came around Project Phoenix, he got further into protecting secrets...

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
| --- |
| Arthur was not interested in Phoenix from a standpoint. He was interested in its impact on the company. To him, Phoenix was a force. It made everyone around it more dangerous. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Arthur had the means, access and control over the estate. If the conditions of Victor's death were manipulated, Arthur was one of the people who could have done it. To Arthur, Project Phoenix had been a symbol of greedy people becoming dangerous, and protecting Montreux Industries meant controlling the chaos around it. |

## Jonah Reed



Jonah Reed worked as a security officer at Montreux Estate the night Victor Montreux passed away. Like everyone else, save for the officers and Board members present to the crisis, Jonah had absolutely no power. Jonah was also new to Montreux, hardworking and aspiring.

Montreux Estate represented his shot at proving he belonged.

Even though he lacked experience compared to others on his security detail, he was viewed as a competent and trustworthy professional who would know his surveillance systems, procedures and monitored critical parts of the complex. This young officer's lack of confidence during such a high-stakes investigation came through whenever he was asked a question. He came off as nervous and distrustful.

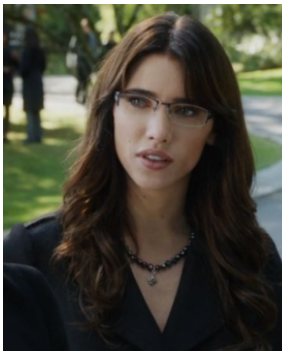
His account of the night was extremely shaky at best, with contradictions in his reports of others' locations throughout the night, as well as the timing of security shift changes. However, it is important to note that Jonah may have felt intimidated due to his inexperience and felt pressure on his career, with the many flaws in his alibi being a symptom of that. No matter how jittery Jonah became, it's possible that because no one takes any notice of the little guy, Jonah could be relied on to see and hear things that others couldn't.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Jonah did not have a stake in Project Phoenix. He did not understand its importance. To him, Phoenix was the reason powerful people started acting strangely and dangerously. Although he had a position on the estate, Jonah had firsthand experience of seeing the effects Phoenix had on Victor and the people around him. Although he may not see the business opportunities surrounding it, he understands the issues it has led to. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Jonah had access to surveillance systems and movement logs on the night of the murder. He had the opportunity to omit, alter or conceal information. Though he wasn't privy to |

what all senior leaders knew, the opportunity to bury, delete, or ignore information was certainly present.

## Elena Voss



Elena Voss worked within Montreux Industries under a false identity and collected insider information on Project Phoenix. She had been hired by the pharmaceutical board to assess the ethical views of this project, as previous projects had encountered many red flags. Her intelligence and ability to adapt and keen eye to investigate the new workings of Montreux Industries made her extremely valuable. She was selected because she was easily able to blend into the business world of Montreux Industries, unnoticed. Elena was an exceptional investigator in that she knew the most important pieces of data came not from documents, but rather from the individual creating the document.

For months, Elena gathered sensitive data on Project Phoenix and its internal struggles within the company and its declining status.

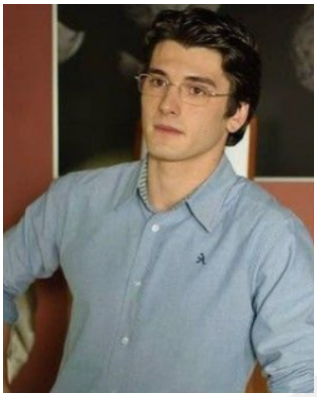
Unlike most spies who would find internal documents, Elena developed an understanding of the people at Montreux Industries and analyzed their relationships and flaws, making her data of much greater value.

Initially, Elena saw this as merely a business transaction that was all about the money and corporate espionage was just another weapon to employ in the harsh business world. As she spent more time at Montreux Industries, her doubt began to grow about the implications of what she was doing and whether her reports were being used merely for reasons of competition. Victor's death caused her mission to shift from a predictable task to an unpredictable event in which she was left without knowing anyone to trust at Montreux Industries and may have provided Montreux Industries with the data that led to the company's current demise.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Elena considered Phoenix, at least at first, to be Montreux Industries' most potent strategic asset, one that she might be able to leverage if her interests eventually ran into issues with those within the company. Gradually, she could feel that the Phoenix was something greater than this all-out corporate scramble and although Elena could understand Victor's compelling sense of urgency. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |
| Elena had every incentive to gather and reveal vulnerabilities at Montreux Industries; with access to its secrets, she posed as great a security risk as any that already existed. Whether she had any motive to murder Victor is less apparent. Her deepest insecurity lies not in what she knows, but in how the world might act once it does. |

## Silas Thorne



On the other side, Silas Thorne had operated a part of Montreux Industries' security and defence branch, where he had been tasked with protecting the company and maintaining control over sensitive information. Silas Thorne also operated under Montreux, as part of an operation to protect the company's control over Project Phoenix; this has involved paying close attention to employees who had access to sensitive information regarding the project. He was the opposite of Elena Voss, who had taken employment as an informant for Montreux but began to harbour reservations about what she was doing there.

Silas was loyal to the mission and controlled; he showed few facial expressions and remained unreadable.

He had the sort of natural skill that allowed him to enter a room, unobserved, and leave it, and people could walk through without remembering he was there. He was excellent at watching situations unfold, seeing the faults, and then acting accordingly. He worked under intimidation or influence, and his prime defence was patience and the long game. When everyone was motivated by greed, fear or pride, Silas was always just a part of a much longer game.

He managed a carefully planned persona at Montreux and refused to allow himself any friendships within Montreux.

Love for any person is a threat. People are potential threats. Silas was too committed to his cause to let his concerns of others' morals influence his objectives. After the death of Montreux and confusion set in, he can see the writing on the wall.

If keeping Phoenix secure means playing a game against Montreux and the investigators, he would need to step his game up one notch.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Silas did not care about Project Phoenix itself. To him,m it was an objective. Valuable only if secured and controlled. The value from Phoenix had been derived not from its success |

but from the power of whoever controlled it.

## Motive/Opportunity

For what he set out to do, Silas certainly had the intelligence, the capability, and the control to bring the operation off with considerable planning. Silas was able to work in the background, to make certain there were no traceable loose ends, to make the cut quickly and cleanly when the time arrived. Where others find motivation in personal vindictive hatred or naked self-interest, Silas seemed largely free of them. He posed his most chilling, potent danger because he was ready to simply use whosoever and whatever, no matter what the cause, in order to succeed.

## Marculio Valen



Marculio Valen, Chief Legal Officer within Montreux Industries. He carried the burden of the legal risks associated with one of the biggest companies in the world. Calm and calculating, he was a master of high-level, strategically inclined thinking. Marculio's prestige came not from his successes, but from his ability to get things right before they became news.

Whereas Victor's ambition was for growth, Marculio's was for stability and for keeping the company in the clear in spite of Victor's expansionist tendencies. He differed from other executives, who clashed publicly with Victor and were often ignored and/or terminated. Marculio's preferred technique was covert influence; he negotiated and navigated to protect the company, not to undermine the CEO.

Yet as the years passed, he grew increasingly worried by the path the company took.

In his estimation, Victor's insatiable ambition constantly risked pushing Montreux into legal jeopardy and regulatory quandaries.

Marculio felt it would be fatal to leave the company while it was so vulnerable.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Marculio believes that Project Phoenix still has potential, but Victor's plan seemed too risky in his opinion. Marculio agreed with reorganizing the team, but he still wanted more security from a legal standpoint and slower operations for his part. Overall, urging for a better reform. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
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| He now had possession of all the privileged legal files, internal inquiries and corporate intelligence that would prove harmful to Montreux Industries; he saw the flaws that would sink the company, and had the means to direct how these problems would be handled by the leadership group. Though he has plenty of justifications to do battle with Victor, what has always ultimately mattered most is the good of the company. It just remains to be seen |

if that comes with supporting Victor, or an intervention against Victor.

## Claire Beaumonte



As the representative of the largest institutional investors, Claire Beaumonte was arguably one of the few other voices wielding power apart from the core executives. Although Montreux, viewed through Victor's eyes, had been one of legacy versus progress, it was only for Claire a measure of performance, a reflection of the value of Montreux in the eyes of the stock market, of the faith of the investors that held a share and a quarter of the capital of Montreux.

Claire's blunt style and penchant for asking tough questions that no one dared ask earned her quite a following. She thought a sentimental attachment to the Montreux legacy kept the company from progressing, and she relentlessly lambasted those in charge for their reluctance to change course.

While she may have come across as malicious to many of Montreux's executives, Claire knew it was simply the best way to protect her investors and, therefore, the best way to protect Montreux itself. She had been warning investors for years that there was no such thing as reputation as a competitive asset, especially after seeing the Valkyrie steadily chipping away at its position.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| She agreed with the idea of change, but was not sure if Victor could implement it. In Claire's opinion, what Phoenix needed was a new leader, more financial discipline and less Montreux' family interference. Overall believing that more external support was greatly necessary if this project were to follow through, as it is biased. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
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| Claire displays great leverage over potential investors, as well as control of sensitive data about the company's future and could potentially be acting in her best interest through the leadership switch, which could lead to a lucrative company. Montreux Industries as a company could collapse too, overall affecting her interest. |

## Daniel Croth



Daniel Croth was the Director of Research and Development at Montreux Industries, and was in charge of some of the company's biggest scientific endeavours. Daniel was in charge of the general research division and making sure Montreux would keep up in a progressively complicated market. While most high-level executives focused on profits, Daniel seemed to feel that a research-based company relied on innovation and on doing research before anything else. While very intelligent, driven, and passionate about research, this conviction led him to disagree with the executives; he regularly expressed his disapproval of the company's fixation on image and on existing research contracts.

Daniel felt that the research director he reported to, Victor Montreux, the man who created the company, did truly respect Daniel, however. Victor would often consult Daniel on where he believed investments in research should be placed, though their working relationship had more recently grown strained since Daniel now thought Victor was not working fast enough, while Victor thought Daniel's grasp of what it took to run a huge international corporation was negligible.

In the past couple of months, Daniel felt a growing frustration; Project Phoenix seemed to absorb a majority of the company's focus and put other research divisions on the back burner. Even though he approved of modernizing, he was worried the new project would use up all of the company's resources, leaving other research at a disadvantage. Since Victor's death, there was now the risk that Daniel's research would be used for something else altogether.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Daniel backs the general goal of Project Phoenix, stating that without a significant technological leap, Montreux Industries will go out of business. However, Daniel feels that the currently proposed plan places too little emphasis on protecting the scientists and scientific projects in need of innovation and too much on the company restructuring itself. To Daniel, Phoenix shouldn't rebuild Montreux Industries; it should rebuild Montreux |

Industries' approach to science. He believes the company has become too careful and political, placing priorities over momentary profits and corporate satisfaction instead of meticulous and groundbreaking research. Daniel favours ProjectPhoenix because it would give scientists and researchers more power to help lead towards greater developments surrounding high-risk technologies, and would allow the research teams to help chase breakthroughs without control from the Board. Without the right oversight, Daniel is worried the project will just turn into a corporate maneuver rather than a development.

## Motive/Opportunity

The only other person we know of who had this access to research and development and future technology at Montreux, in addition to knowing what to make of the Phoenix project and its importance, is Daniel. He had no personal apparent incentive to hurt Victor. But in light of his complaints and obvious frustration with the leadership of Montreux, the events following Victor's death may have served him. If Victor's murder put an end to the Phoenix project, it may have removed a factor limiting Daniel's power at Montreux.

## Isabella Ment



By day, Isabella Ment served as Victor Montreux's personal attorney and among the handful of people privy to goings-on outside the corporate framework of Montreux Industries. Whereas Marculio Vale served the interests of Montreux Industries in the company's legal capacity, Isabella Ment represented Victor Montreux in personal matters – not just business but in personal agreements, sensitive subjects, confidential agreements never submitted to the Board, or sensitive discussions.

Impeccable, calm, shrewd and intelligent, Isabella acquired a reputation among business associates as a woman who could navigate treacherous ground with an inscrutable expression and no betraying inner thought. Though she had no involvement in the day-to-day operations of Montreux Industries, she was close enough to Victor to receive information most executives only dared dream of getting. As time has passed, Isabella became the recipient of an overwhelming measure of Victor's confidences and, though the public's image was often of a CEO that other executives openly challenged, Isabella was the woman Victor would turn to in times when he needed genuine advice and the person who often had thoughts that closely watched Victor’s own fears, ambitions and anxieties.

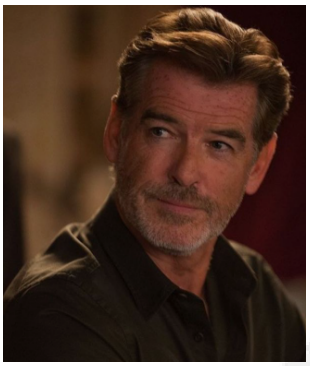
Isabella found that in recent weeks, Victor was becoming almost secretive, and had been in the past few weeks preparing papers and having various private discussions and had even mentioned persons in the company about whom he felt wary. However, to the extent he needed a third party's opinion, such an exchange never materialized.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| To Isabella, Project Phoenix was Victor's last play in an effort to prevent the collapse of the company he spent his entire life on. She certainly understood why he saw it as a vital choice; however, she did believe his attachment to Montreux Industries potentially played a role in its necessity. For Isabella, unlike many CEOs, Phoenix isn't simply a business choice; it is the mark he will leave and whether he should do so even after he's gone. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
| --- |

Isabella possessed Victor's private conversations and private papers, as well as the secrets he discussed with her in confidence. If Isabella knew a detail of Victor's last decisions, it could turn the investigation around. This choice was the hardest one she ever made, because her loyalty to Victor demanded her keeping some of his secrets as her own, or telling the truth.

## Hendrick White



Hendrick White was in charge of corporate strategy at Montreux Industries, deciding the future path of the company. Where Victor's decisions were driven by intuition, reputation and ego, Hendrick was guided by a methodical research process, a study of markets, and realistic predictions.

Hendrick was extremely bright and tactical; an executive seeking to learn the likely outcome of a critical decision would often seek him out. He foresaw many of the current problems within Montreux years in advance, arguing that by continuing to rely on past contracts and old achievements, the company would be hurt in the end.

Though he knew the answers, Hendrick frequently had trouble applying his strategies at Montreux. Victor would value his input but act purely on his vision. This made for an interesting relationship: Hendrick admired Victor's past but also felt that his resistance to change was part of the reason for Montreux Industries' decline.

During the months leading to Victor's death, Hendrick grew increasingly involved in conversations about Project Phoenix. He favoured a changing landscape for Montreux but doubted that Victor's visions were realistic and that the company could maintain itself post-transformation. Many saw Hendrick as the future of Montreux Industries, while others thought of him as a man just waiting for the perfect chance to assume the reins himself.

| Perspective on Project Phoenix |
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| Hendrick thought Project Phoenix was needed, but that it wasn't the whole picture. While he agreed with Victor that Montreux Industries would need to move beyond its current scope, Hendrick thought that Phoenix didn't set realistic timeframes, include financial protection measures, or adequately address risk. While he favours modernization, Hendrick feels that Phoenix should be rebuilt with a focus on stabilization. It is not Victor's picture that Hendrick wishes to replicate, but a company that will endure long after Victor has exited. |

| Motive/Opportunity |
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Hendrick had the blueprint to challenge and weaken Montreux Industries' position, a key detail when discussing the weakness analysis of Montreux's competition, the critical report of its internal shortcomings, the key to reshaping its entire destiny. In short, Hendrick knew that Montreux's Achilles' heel was, and he had the drive to bring Montreux's restructuring. So as Montreux's heir apparent, he might even wish Victor removed, but he surely didn't see Montreux Industries tearing apart as a result.

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